

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 AID-20 IGA-02 AGR-20 OMB-01 EB-11

COME-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-03

DODE-00 SR-02 ORM-03 RSR-01 /098 W
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R 111405 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2074

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: EAID, SREF, UNRWA, XF

SUBJECT: PL-480 TITLE II - US COMMODITY CONTRIBUTION TO UNRWA

REF: (A) STATE 84389; (B) STATE 80491

SUMMARY: UNRWA COMGEN AND HIS TOP AIDES RELIEVED AND GRATEFUL THAT US FY 1974 FLOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL NOT BE REDUCED AS DRASTICALLY AS THEY HAD FEARED. THEY NOW STUDYING MEANS BY WHICH AGENCY CAN MAKE UP FOR FLOUR LOSS. THEY REACTED NEGATIVELY TO AID/ W PROPOSAL RE DIVERSION TO BEIRUT OF FUTURE JORDAN- BOUND SHIPMENTS OF FLOUR DESTINED FOR UNRWA USE. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBOFF NOTIFIED UNRWA DEPUTY COMGEN KONTOS MAY 4 OF DECISION REPORTED REFTEL A, STRESSING POINTS CONTAINED PARA 2 THEREIN. BOTH KONTOS AND AGENCY COMPTROLLER CALLOW EXPRESSED RELIEF THAT REDUCTION IN US FY 1974 FLOUR SHIPMENTS TO UNRWA WILL NOT BE DRASTIC AS THAT ENVISAGED STATE 59544 (NOTAL).

2. ALTHOUGH COMGEN HAD EARLIER INDICATED HE CONTEMPLATED NO
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MAJOR RETRENCHMENT IN UNRWA BASIC RATION OPERATIONS IN ANTICIPATION OF SHARPER CUTBACK IN FY 1974 US FLOUR CONTRIBUTION (OUR A-92, APR 20), KONTOS TOLD US ON MAY 11 THAT IN LIGHT OF US DECISION REPORTED REFTEL A, AGENCY IS CONSIDERING SEVERAL ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION TO HELP MAKE UP FOR LESSER LOSS, INCLUDING; (A) CESSATION OF REIMBURSABLE FLOUR TRANSFER ARRANGEMENT WITH GOJ, WHICH (AS NOTED PARA 3 OUR 3821) WOULD RESULT IN CASH LOSS TO AGENCY OF AT LEAST DOLS 2 MILLION IN 1973-74; OR (B) SOME CUTBACK IN BASIC RATION OPERATIONS (PROBABLY BY REDUCING FLOUR COMPONENT OF INDIVIDUAL RATION) THAT WOULD PERMIT UNRWA MAINTAIN ITS TRANSFER ARRANGEMENT WITH GOJ. IF SECOND COURSE IS PURSUED, COMGEN WOULD FEEL OBLIGED FURNISH ADVANCE NOTICE TO HOST GOVTS, WHOSE PREDICTABLY ADVERSE (EXCEPT FOR ISRAEL) REACTIONS TO ANY SUGGESTION OF REDUCTION IN UNRWA SERVICES LIKELY GENERATE, AS IN PAST, CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL CONTROVERSY IN ADCOM, WORKING GROUP AND LATER AT UNGA.

3. RE FY 1974 SHIPPING SCHEDULE, CALLOW SAID HE RETHINKING HIS EARLIER DECISION (REPORTED OUR A-98) TO FOLLOW SCHEDULE OUTLINED OUR 2972 (NOTAL) AND REQUESTED FEW MORE DAYS TO STUDY MATTER. WILL REPORT HIS FINAL DECISION PROMPTLY.

4. UNRWA REACTION TO AID/ W SUGGESTION (REFTEL B) THAT ALL FUTURE UNRWA CARGO DESTINED FOR JORDAN VIA AQABA BE DIVERTED TO BEIRUT IS DECIDEDLY NEGATIVE. CALLOW NOTED AGENCY SAVES APPROXIMATELY DOLS 7 PER TON ON HANDLING COSTS FOR FLOUR RECEIVED AT AQABA INSTEAD OF BEIRUT. IN ADDITION, HE POINTS OUT THAT WHOLE TRANSPORT SYSTEM FROM BEIRUT PORT TO HINTERLAND BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONGESTED AND THAT INPUT OF LARGE ADDITIONAL QUANTITIES OF GOODS DESTINED FOR JORDAN INTO THIS PIPELINE WOULD ONLY MAKE MATTERS WORSE. SAID AGENCY COULD PROBABLY LIVE WITH EXTRA DELAYS ANTICIPATED FROM USE OF BEIRUT BUT SUCH DELAYS, COMBINED WITH SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER COSTS OF TRANS- SHIPMENT VIA BEIRUT (E. G., 45,000 TONS OF FLOUR SHIPPED OVERLAND FROM HERE TO JORDAN IN FY 1974 WOULD PLACE EXTRA BURDEN OF OVER DOLS 300,000 ON UNRWA' S STRAINED BUDGET, COMPEL UNRWA TO REQUEST CONTINUATION OF SHIPPING VIA AQABA. HE ALSO REMARKED THAT AGENCY' S PAST REQUESTS FOR DIVERSION OF AQABA- BOUND CARGOES TO BEIRUT STEMMED PRIMARILY FROM DELAYS IN ARRIVALS CAUSED BY USG' S INABILITY TO ADHERE TO SHIPMENT SCHEDULES PREVIOUSLY AGREED UPON.

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